



# Department Updates

June 2018

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## Finance

### Jodi Busch Finance Director

We are winding up the audit season in the Barron County Finance Department. CliftonLarsonAllen was onsite from April 23rd through May 18th to audit the Financials for 2017. Due to CLA staffing changes over the last year and a half, we continued to see new faces this visit. With this brought more questions as to how things are done in Barron County. Areas of focus included auditing various accounts in all Barron County funds, grant testing, fixed assets, payroll, treasurer's cash and investments.

Even though CLA's on-site visit is completed, the audit continues, with CLA compiling our Financial Statements and preparing reports to be filed with the State and Federal Governments. Once completed, drafts of the Financial Statements will be sent to Barron County for our review. Once our review is completed, reports will

be filed and the final Financial Statements will be printed. The final deadline for completion is July 31<sup>st</sup>.

As we finalize the audit, our focus will now switch to the 2019 Budget. New budget spreadsheets will be created, and wage projections will be calculated and distributed to the departments with the budget worksheets the second week of July. Then it is full speed ahead to build a balanced budget over the summer, with final County Board approval in early November.

Starting in 2018, another project in the Finance Department is converting paper documents into an electronic format with the Laserfiche software. By this conversion, the documents become more easily accessible, more secure, and will create cabinet space in the office and our storage room. So far, vouchers, journal entries, contracts, and payroll information

are being converted. As we move forward with these new processes, we continue to look for more ways Laserfiche can be utilized.

## ORANGE CONES PUT DOWN THE PHONES

**It is illegal to talk on a  
handheld mobile  
device in a Wisconsin road  
work zone!**



## County Clerk

### DeeAnn Cook County Clerk

Wedding season is definitely upon us and we are seeing a big uptick in marriage license applications.

The April Election was fairly typical with a turnout of approximately 17% of eligible voters and 26% of registered voters casting ballots. The only contested race for county board was in District 6 where Pam Fall defeated Kay Curtin. In District 28, Bert Skinner was elected. Incumbent Chuck Christianson did not seek re-election. Chuck has since passed away and will be greatly missed. In District 3, Ken Jost was elected but sadly passed away before the new term began. John Banks, who served on the board from 2002-2006 but did not seek re-election and was replaced by Ken Jost, was appointed to serve out the term. There were several municipal and school board contests also on the

ballot with the most notable being the City of Barron Mayor race where Ron Fladten defeated Rod Nordby. Special thanks to Vonnie Ritchie, Jeff & Pam French and Margo Katterhagen who volunteered their time helping Jess and I take in election results after the polls closed. Their help is invaluable during that chaotic time when results are coming in fast and furious.

At the April 2018 Reorganization County Board Meeting, Louie Okey was elected Chair, Don Horstman Vice Chair and Burnell Hanson Second Vice Chair. At the June County Board Meeting James "Jess" Miller was bestowed the title of Honorary County Board Chair Emeritus. Jess has served on the board since being appointed in October 1994. He served as Vice Chair from 2002-2006 and Chair from 2006-2018.

We have already started preparation for the fall partisan elec-

tions. The candidate filing deadline has passed so now we start preparing ballots and programming for the election equipment. The August 14, 2018 Partisan Primary Election is where the voter must choose one party then vote for candidates only within that party. The purpose is to narrow the field of candidates and the top vote getters in each contest for each party move on to the General Election. It is the most confusing election for the voters because in all other elections, they can choose to vote for candidates from different parties. The race garnering the most attention by far is the Governor race where there are numerous candidates vying for their party nomination. Also on the ballot for the fall elections are Secretary of State, State Treasurer, US Senator, Congress, State Senator, Assembly, Sheriff and Clerk of Circuit Court. Incumbents Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald and Clerk of Court Sharon Millermon are both unopposed.

## Treasurer's Office

### Vonnie Ritchie, Treasurer

I attended the WCTA (Wisconsin County Treasurers' Association) Seminar June 6-8 in Green Bay. These seminars are very educational. The Department of Revenue presented us with information on new law changes, the Lottery and Gaming Credit audit process, and answered many questions. Others presented us with information on banking services, legislative issues, economic forecast, omitted taxes, and correction of errors.

#### Taxes

We are getting ready for the July

tax collection by updating mailing addresses. Reminder postcards will be sent out the last week in June for the 2<sup>nd</sup> installment taxes due in July. The 2017 postponed tax balance is \$12,058,168. We also send out statements for delinquent taxes. The delinquent tax balance is \$702,918 (this amount does not include interest and penalty due). These amounts do not include the 2017 taxes for the City of Rice Lake because the city collects the current year taxes through July 31, 2018. By sending these notices, taxpayers are reminded of the due date, amounts due, our office hours, and their payment options. These notices allow us to

process payments more efficiently because the parcel information is included with the check.

#### Tax Deed

We have started the In-Rem Tax Foreclosure process on the delinquent 2014 taxes. The final date to pay the delinquent 2014 taxes is July 13, 2018. Parcel information is listed on the county website although some parcels have been paid. The lists showing the redeemed parcels are on the bulletin boards in the hallway outside our office and inside our office. If you have questions please feel free to contact us anytime.

## Forestry

### John Cisek Forester

Good progress was made on the two sales that were active this past winter.

#### Timber Sale Activity

- Rajek Sale – Harvest and hauling was completed. Road work is yet to be completed.
- Beckers Gate – Harvesting was completed on this sale. Due to an early spring break - up and lack of market demand, forced the contractor to stack-up the wood on 29<sup>th</sup> St. Hauling continues as markets allow.

### This spring saw the start of salvage of timber that was damaged in the 2017 tornado.

- Silver Creek – This sale situated in Vance Creek Township, was impacted by straight line winds. The plantation was considered a total loss and was liquidated. The sale contains an estimated 20 MBF of softwood and hardwood sawlogs and 852 cords of softwood and hardwood cordwood. At this time cutting is complete and wood is being hauled.
- Wisti Storm Damage – This sale situated in Sumner Township on 12 ¾ Ave. The sale is expected to generate approximately 88 MBF of

hardwood logs and 970 cords of aspen and hardwood cordwood.

#### Grants

- In January of 2018 Barron County received a Sustainable Forestry Sustainable Grant in the amount of \$12,000.00 to control buckthorn in the Township of Cedar Lk. Buckthorn has invaded a stand of aspen east of the Loch Lomond development. Bids will be accepted on or before June 28<sup>th</sup>.
- The application for a Knowles – Nelson Stewardship grant to defray the costs involved with the purchase of the C.U. Lodge LLC property is still under review.